

Friends Meeting House  
Woodbury, Gloucester County, New Jersey

HABS NJ-80

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Seymour Williams, A.I.A., District Officer  
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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3-10-1980

Friends Meeting House  
Woodbury, Gloucester County, New Jersey

Owner: Society of Friends

Date of Erection: 1715(?)

Architect:

Builder:

Present condition: Good, the building was extended  
26 feet in 1783

Number of stories: Two

Materials of construction: Foundation - stone

Exterior walls - brick

Interior walls - plaster  
originally whitewashed;  
interior woodwork cream  
white

Roof - pitch, slate

Historical Data:

The first Friends Meetings in Woodbury Creeke were held in private homes and were under the Haddonfield Monthly Meeting. In 1715 ground was given to the Friends upon which a meeting house was to be erected. It appears from the records that the meeting house was not finished in 1722 because in the Haddonfield Monthly Meeting

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records (1710-1731 L - 17a pg. 87) we find the following statement:

"At a monthly meeting held in Haddonfield on the 12th day of the 9th mo. 1722 At sd meeting Constantine Wood paid three pounds towards the finishing ye meeting house in behalf of friends of Woodbery Creeke."

In 1754, 1764, and 1801 additional ground was obtained until the meeting held about two and one-half acres. The burial ground is one of the oldest in Gloucester County; in it is the grave of Ann Whitall, a famous old quakeress who refused to flee her home during the Battle of Red Bank.

The building was used as a barracks and a hospital for Continental troops; local tradition says that many Continental soldiers were taken to the meeting house in Woodbury after the Battle of Red Bank. In the Gloucester County Historical Society, there is an original letter dated November 7, 1777, which contains a protest to General Varnham against the use of the building. Job Whitall, in his diary under the same date as the letter, wrote that the soldiers had made a hospital out of the Quaker meeting house and for that account meetings were held out of doors.

The minutes of the Woodbury Meeting show that in 1809 forty-five wagon sheds were to be built. These minutes further show that in 1811 a female school was erected and was opened in 1812; this building was torn down in 1924.

The meeting house at present has a movable section dividing it. The east side is being used by the Hicksites and the west side by the Orthodox.

A.S.  
S. Woods

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302 Arch Street, Philadelphia

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Reviewed  
Sept 2, 1936  
HWC